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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/647,629	08/25/2003	Enrique Trivelli	40043.0005	2547

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EXAMINER

HEWITT, JAMES M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3679

DATE MAILED: 02/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/647,629

Applicant(s)

TRIVELLI, ENRIQUE

Examiner

James M Hewitt

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CPB

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

In paragraph [0002] line 3, "meter" should be "meters".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-4 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 1 line 4, "the coupling" should be "a respective coupling".

In claim 3 lines 1-2, the phrase "joining by means of threaded coupling of pipes intended to form pipelines to convey fluids" should be rephrased for the sake of clarity.

In claim 4 lines 1-2, the phrase "joining by means of threaded coupling of pipes intended to form pipelines to convey fluids" should be rephrased for the sake of clarity.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 3-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claims 3 and 4, the phrase "and the like" renders the claims indefinite because the claims include elements not actually disclosed (those encompassed by "or the like"), thereby rendering the scope of the claim(s) unascertainable. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Also, in claims 3 and 4, the use of the phrase "especially corrosive fluids" renders the claims indefinite as it creates confusion over the intended scope of the claims. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

The Examiner suggests amending the claims to read: A seal according to claim 1 [2], joined by threaded coupling of pipes that form pipelines that convey corroding fluids, hydrocarbons and derivatives thereof.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hilton (US 2,487,241).

With respect to claim 1, Hilton discloses a seal (8) for threaded joints for pipelines formed by pipes with outer threads joined by couplings with inner threads, the seal constituted by a substantially cylindrical sleeve of elastomeric material (resilient material is considered inclusive of elastomers), wherein the outer surface of the sleeve has at least in part of its length a thread engaging the inner threads of a respective coupling.

With respect to claim 3, wherein the seal is joined by threaded coupling of pipes that form pipelines that convey corroding fluids, hydrocarbons and derivatives thereof.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hilton (US 2,487,241) in view of Watts et al (US 2,766,998).

Hilton teaches all the limitations of claims 2 and 4 except that the sleeve is enlarged at both ends by sealing lips. Watts et al teaches a sealing gasket, for example in Figure 2, that seals two abutting pipe sections that are joined by a surrounding,

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internally threaded coupling (48). Watts' seal includes a flared sealing lip on each side of the side at the inner diameter of the seal, the lips providing sealing with the inwardly flared ends of the pipes. In view of Watts' teaching, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Hilton's seal to include two sealing lips at the inner diameter of the seal in order to provide additional and improved sealing of the abutting pipes while still maintaining a continuous, smooth interior to permit swabbing of the tubing, as required by Hilton.

Conclusion

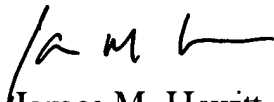
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James M Hewitt whose telephone number is 703-305-0552. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 930am-600pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne Browne can be reached on 703-308-1159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J M H', is positioned above the printed name.

James M. Hewitt
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 3600